

CENTER CITY DIGEST

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CENTER CITY DISTRICT AND CENTRAL PHILADELPHIA DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
PHILADELPHIA, PA
SPRING 2002



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A New Response to Quality-of-Life Crimes

The Philadelphia Community Court officially opened for business on March 4, 2002. This innovative initiative blends criminal justice and social service agencies in a comprehensive response to quality-of-life crimes, emphasizing community service and behavioral treatment programs, rather than jail time, for low-level offenses.

Within a geographic boundary that includes Center City, University City and sections of North and South Philadelphia, the Community Court has jurisdiction over quality-of-life offenses including theft from auto, retail theft, drug possession, vandalism, panhandling and prostitution.

"The Philadelphia Police Department has placed a very high priority on reducing quality-of-life crimes in Philadelphia. Now the officers on the street will know that we have a court dedicated to following through and addressing the challenges posed by repeat offenders."
Police Commissioner Sylvester Johnson

Instead of scheduling cases weeks after the offenses are committed, defendants have expedited hearings at Community Court, usually within 36 hours of arrest. At the same time, on-site social workers and medical personnel provide direct connections to needed social or medical services to address the underlying causes of the criminal behavior. Treatment programs, either mandated by the Court or entered voluntarily by the offender, include



Speaking at the Court's opening: Managing Director Estelle Richman and Councilman Frank DiCicco.



Cutting the Community Court ribbon, from left, Rebecca Rimel, CEO and President, The Pew Charitable Trusts, DA Lynne Abraham and City Councilman Darrell Clarke. Partially obscured: First Public Defender Charles Cunningham.

drug treatment, health care, education or job training. Sentences emphasize community service and restitution to the neighborhood for the harm done by the offense.

The Court serves as an alternative to the traditional courts where, because of prison overcrowding and a lack of sufficient alternative sentencing options, the police and the courts cannot adequately address many quality-of-life offenses. Routinely, those arrested are released on non-cash bail and either fail to appear for court dates or are sentenced to straight probation, putting them back on the street with little supervision. Not surprisingly, these offenders have a high rate of recidivism.

"We hope that this type of initiative can expand throughout the city, so we can have a positive impact not only in Center City and surrounding neighborhoods, but across the entire city."

Municipal Court Administrative Judge Seamus P. McCaffery

Continued on page 2

A New Response to Quality-of-Life Crimes — *continued*

Planning for the innovative court began several years ago with support from The Pew Charitable Trusts and included the City of Philadelphia, First Judicial District, District Attorney, Defender Association and Police Department, along with the Center City District.

Many of those partners gathered in the new courtroom at 1401 Arch Street on March 4th to cut the ribbon. "The Street administration is very pleased to be part of this innovative response to quality-of-life crimes," Managing Director Estelle Richman declared at the ribbon cutting. "We want to thank in particular City Council President Anna Verna and City Council members Darrell Clarke and Frank DiCicco for appropriating the funds necessary to pay for additional criminal justice agency staff and for the annual operating costs to support Court operations." The Pew Charitable Trusts provided funding to the CCD to support the social and medical services.

"We were delighted to provide the initial planning grant for this effort to the Center City District and are proud to be a part of this unique public-private partnership."
Rebecca W. Rimel, president and CEO of The Pew Charitable Trusts



With resources secured by State Senator Vincent J. Fumo, the 12,500-square foot space was completely renovated to include a police holding area, courtroom, and community service and social service program space. Local law firms and the Archdiocese of Philadelphia donated furniture.



"The Community Court is a very important part of the strategy to retain residents and businesses in Philadelphia and to create an environment that attracts new people and investment to the city."
State Senator Vincent Fumo

Initially, most community-service assignments will be with the sidewalk cleaning, landscape maintenance and graffiti removal programs of the Center City District and the University City District, both of whom will donate management, supervision, uniforms and equipment.



"I have been an advocate for a Community Court ever since I visited the Midtown Community Court in Manhattan in 1994. Philadelphia's Community Court will take carefully selected quality-of-life offenses, and summary cases, and treat them with resources

that will address offender addiction and other social problems. In addition to making these offenders accountable for the consequences of their illegal conduct, they will also be required to do community service and, by doing so, make it less likely that they may re-offend."

District Attorney Lynne Abraham

Community courts now operate in 18 locations, including Atlanta, Los Angeles, Indianapolis and New York. The Midtown (Manhattan) Community Court, the nation's first, opened in 1993 and has had a marked positive effect on reducing crime. Neighborhood prostitution dropped significantly in the court's first two years, and illegal vending has been dramatically curtailed. In Hartford, Connecticut, where a community court opened in 1998, there has been a marked increase in successful enforcement of laws against quality-of-life crime. Summons and arrests for excessive noise violations rose from zero in 1998 to 604 in 2000; summons and arrests for public drinking went from 20 in 1998 to 665 in 2000.

The Philadelphia Community Court operates under the aegis of Philadelphia Municipal Court, with the Honorable Wendy Pew presiding. William Babcock, Esq., Community Court coordinator, an employee of the Center City District, is responsible for coordinating the diverse organizations that are located within the Court.



Community Court supporters Councilman Darrell Clarke, left, and Philadelphia Police Inspector James Tiano.

Walk Philadelphia! Center City District Launches Tours

Few places in the country offer the architectural bounty of Philadelphia, where three centuries of buildings tell the story of how the region – and the nation – grew. And there is no better way to experience architecture than on foot. Beginning this month, and continuing through November, the Center City District is presenting *Walk Philadelphia*, a series of guided architecture tours of the city and region.

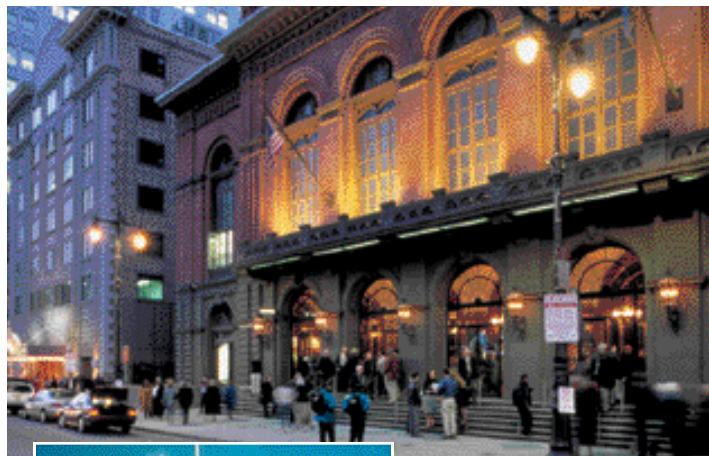
The acclaimed walking tours, sponsored for many years by the Foundation for Architecture, offer unique insights into Center City, Philadelphia neighborhoods and destinations throughout the region. The tours offer the chance to explore colonial Philadelphia and walk some of its original streets in Old City. Other tours explore Philadelphia in the Gilded Age with a visit to some of the city's preeminent period hotels, or wend their way through a warren of often-missed residential alleys on the Littlest Streets tour. The Benjamin Franklin Parkway tour looks back at the grand boulevard's neo-classic buildings and ahead to the new Calder Museum.

Neighborhood tours include Girard Avenue, home to some of the city's finest 19th-century architecture, Tacony, conceived and developed as a utopian manufacturing community, and Chestnut Hill, which sprang up in the 1880s with the railroad. Further afield, tours include visits to Media, a planned community of the 1850s, and historic Haddonfield, a Quaker community with many surviving 18th-century structures.

Most tours last approximately one to two hours and no reservations are required. *Walk Philadelphia* also offers group bus tours, special children's tours, illustrated lectures and private group tours.

Thanks to [Fleet Bank](#) for their support of the *Walk Philadelphia* brochure.

To learn more, pick up a *Walk Philadelphia* brochure at locations throughout the region including the Independence Visitor Center, AIA Bookstore, Fleet Bank branches and museums and hotels or visit www.centercity-philadelphia.org. Or call 215-848-9141 or email: walkphiladelphia@juno.com.



Walk Philadelphia architecture tours explore Philadelphia the best way — on foot. Destinations include the Avenue of the Arts, above, with its historic and recent architecture, City Hall, left, and colonial Philadelphia, below.



Crime Prevention Services: Combating Downtown Crime

The Center City District is proud of its partnership with the Philadelphia Police and the success in reducing downtown crime. To expand upon these efforts, the CCD has, for the last several years, coordinated the Philadelphia Crime Prevention Council.

Every other month, 200 representatives of federal, state and local law enforcement and security personnel from the retail, banking, healthcare, hotel, parking, university, hospitality, and insurance industries, and the office sector, meet to review current crime trends and develop joint strategies to combat crime on the streets and in the buildings of Center City.

The Council, established in 1998, was instrumental in keeping private security informed of security preparations for the Republican National Convention in 2000 and using the email network to provide updates on local activities in Center City throughout the convention. More recently, the Council has taken on a new urgency by serving as a clearinghouse for information regarding efforts to combat terrorism and improving communication between the public and private sectors.

At one recent meeting, for example, Philadelphia Police Commissioner Sylvester Johnson and Roseanne Russo, Assistant Special Agent-in-Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Philadelphia Field Division, spoke to the membership regarding Philadelphia's

strategies to enhance security and communication to combat terrorism. The April meeting will be co-hosted by Patrick Meehan, the U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, and will focus on the U.S. Attorney's role in coordinating the Joint Terrorism Taskforce.

Other topics have included the opening of the new Philadelphia Community Court (see page one) and the Philadelphia District Attorney's efforts to prosecute repeat offenders.

The Council has also been a key proponent of the new On-Call Court Program, which minimizes the court time required of retail employees involved in the prosecution of shoplifting and retail theft cases. Under the program, retail employees in Center City can remain in their stores instead of being present in court until a case is fully assembled. By reducing the number of court appearances and limiting time spent waiting, it is hoped that retailers will be more willing to pursue prosecution of these crimes.

The Crime Prevention Council is chaired by Stacy Irving, CCD's Director of Crime Prevention Services. For more information, contact Stacy at (215) 440-5500 or at sirving@centercityphila.org.

FBI Honors Center City District



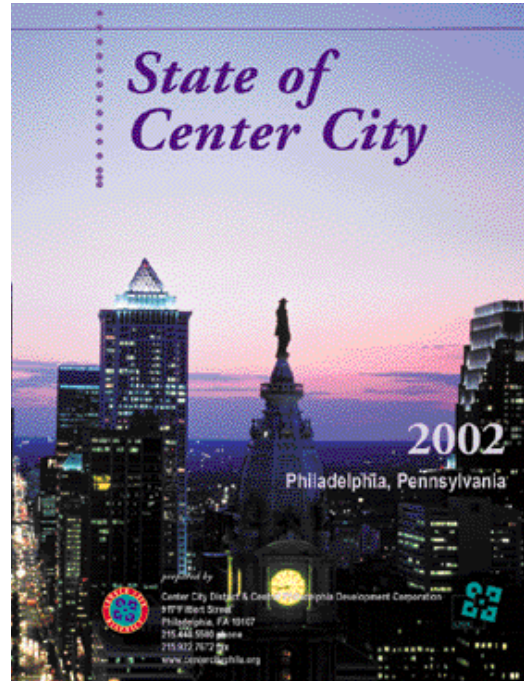
The FBI Director's Community Leadership Award was recently presented to the Center City District's crime prevention program. Citing dropping downtown crime and increased public safety, the FBI honored CCD by noting that "through your dedication and leadership, our nation's goal of safe and vibrant communities can be achieved." At the FBI's Philadelphia office were, from left, CCD Executive Director Paul R. Levy, former Special Agent-in-Charge Robert Conforti, CCD Director of Crime Prevention Services Stacy Irving, CCD Director of Community Service Representatives Bill Hughes and Assistant FBI Special Agent-in-Charge Laura Laughlin.

State of Center City 2002

The Center City District and Central Philadelphia Development Corporation have published the seventh annual *State of Center City* report, providing an overview of all the basic components of the downtown marketplace: office buildings, convention trade, hotels, housing, retail establishments, tourist attractions, education and cultural institutions, parks, highway access, transit and parking. *State of Center City 2002* also documents very positive quality-of-life trends, the significant increases in residential population and the continuing reduction in crime, while outlining some of Philadelphia's key challenges and opportunities.

Center City is now the location for 40 percent of all private-sector jobs in the city, according to the report, which also documents Philadelphia's diversified economy, with health care, education, professional and business services accounting for almost half of the private-sector employment in the city. The *State of Center City* also reports significant growth in the hospitality sector due to strategic public and private investments.

"Like all American cities in 2001, we experienced the contraction of the national economy and the after-shocks of the terrorist attacks of September 11th," said CCD Executive Director Paul R. Levy. "As the economy rebounds, Center City has the opportunity to add jobs for neighborhood and regional residents, by addressing the key challenges in the office and hospitality sectors. This *State of Center City* documents these and other challenges that Philadelphia must overcome to be a more competitive location."



Single copies of the 52-page, full-color report are free. Additional copies are available for \$12 each for 2-9 copies; \$10 each for quantities of 10 or more. To obtain copies, log on to www.centercityphila.org or contact Rachael Alessandro at 215-440-5500 or via email at ralessandro@centercityphila.org.

Mark your calendar for the 1st annual Center City Beach Party!

Wednesday June 5

4:30 to 8:30 p.m.

1600 block of Market street

Kick off the summer with co-workers and friends as Market Street becomes the season's biggest beach party. Enjoy food, spirits and giveaways, free live entertainment featuring Love Seed Mama Jump, The Mahoney Brothers and Steel Source. Sign up with your corporate team for the Volleyball Tournament and other fun competitions.

Visit www.centercityphila.org for information and updates.

Living in the Center of Everything: Center City's Residential Success

At the heart of Philadelphia's ongoing downtown revival is the strong growth in its residential population, enlivening the streets to create a "24/7" city. Two recent Center City District publications focus on that phenomenon.

Capitalizing on the Success of Downtown Living: Expanding the Boundaries of Center City is a new report that analyzes 2000 Census figures and the developments and trends that have reshaped Center City's residential market. Among its findings:

- Center City has been growing for decades. Since 1960, Philadelphia as a whole has lost 24 percent of its population, but Center City's core area has grown by 55 percent.

- Proximity to the central business district is one of downtown living's strongest competitive advantages and Philadelphia has the largest percentage of residents who walk to work among cities nationwide.

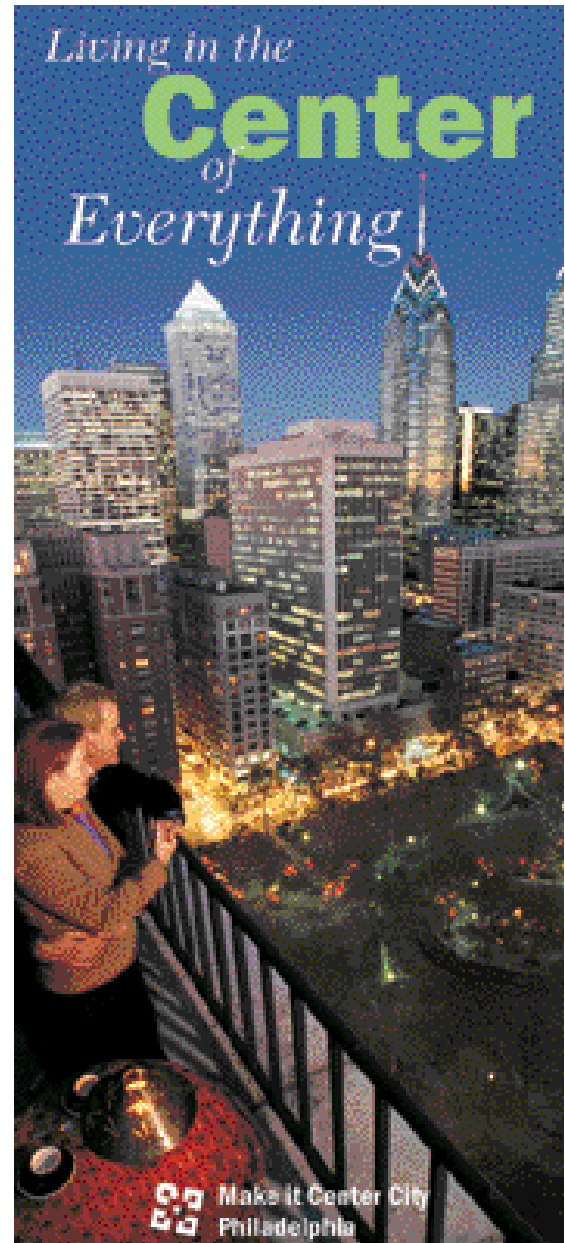
- Over the past three decades, Center City has expanded beyond the boundaries defined by city planners in the 1960s – Vine to South streets, river to river – to include adjacent neighborhoods that have been renovated due to the increasing demand for Center City housing.

- Reflecting a national trend, the average household size in Center City (1.5 persons) is substantially lower than in other parts of the city and region. In 2000, 90 percent of Center City households contained one or two people.

- Since 1997, when Philadelphia enacted the 10-year tax abatement for conversion of underused commercial and industrial properties to residential use, a total of 2,624 new units have been completed, with another 688 on the way. Based on an average of 1.5 residents per unit, the tax abatements have provided new housing for 4,000 residents in Center City.

Living in the Center of Everything is both a promotional brochure that can be used by developers, brokers and landlords, and an invaluable resource for new residents of Center City. The 24-page, full-color booklet features descriptions of Center City amenities and neighborhoods, along with detailed resource listings for everything from supermarkets to movies to government offices.

Both *Capitalizing on the Success of Downtown Living: Expanding the Boundaries of Center City* and *Living in the Center of Everything* are available for free and can be obtained by logging on to www.centercityphila.org or contacting Rachael Allesandro at 215-440-5500 or rallesandro@centercityphila.org.



Center City District to the Rescue

One of the most important aspects of the Center City District's mission is to improve the quality of life by assisting in ways large and small. And we're gratified when we hear about the impact our employees have every day on the streets of Center City.

A recent visitor to Philadelphia who cut himself in an accident at his hotel wrote to thank community service representatives (CSRs) [Jacqueline Ashburn](#) and [Moses Pierce](#). "They went way beyond the call of duty and their assistance is greatly appreciated. It comforts us to know that there are people who are so willing and so passionate to help," the visitor wrote.

Joan Welsch of the Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce called to express thanks to CSRs [Renold Morales](#) and [John Potts](#), who helped out when her car had a flat tire one January night at 15th and Latimer streets. The CSRs directed traffic around the disabled vehicle, helped to remove the tire, and waited with the car and its passengers until help arrived.

Phyllis R. Ryan of the Philadelphia Committee to End Homelessness wrote to [James Murphy](#), the CCD's Homeless Action Team supervisor, to thank CCD staff for its annual contribution of clothing and toiletries. "From October through December, 1,968 individuals utilized our services to get a hot shower and a change of clothes. None of that would have been possible without your donation," Ryan wrote.



From left, Community Service Representatives Morales, Potts, Pierce and Murphy.
Not pictured: CSR Ashburn.

CCD Hosts Visitors from the United Kingdom

Twice in recent months, the Center City District has played host to visitors from the United Kingdom, here to learn about the CCD's community service representative program and crime prevention initiatives. Six senior police officials from the U.K. came to Philadelphia in February to learn more about the successful 10-year-old partnership between the Center City District and the Philadelphia Police Department. CCD shared information about the joint roll calls between police and its community service representatives, joint crime analysis and computerized mapping programs, crime prevention initiatives and special event deployment.

In March, CCD hosted about 50 government officials and safety ambassadors or "wardens" as they are called in England. Philadelphia's initiative to reduce graffiti and the city's successful Mural Arts Program were among the topics.



Jane Golden, executive director of the Mural Arts Program, briefs officials from the U.K. on Philadelphia's success in enlivening city streets with murals where graffiti once flourished.

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CCD's 2002 Budget: Sources and Uses

Each year, the Center City District directly bills and collects mandatory assessments from 2,150 properties within district boundaries. These revenues are used exclusively to fund the CCD's supplemental services and physical improvements within the district. The CCD also receives revenues from other sources, such as contracts and management agreements. For 2002:

- The top 15 properties pay 33 percent of total program cost with an average charge of \$232,253.
- The top 200 properties pay 88 percent of total program cost, with an average charge of \$47,108.
- The smallest annual charge is \$1.02.
- The highest annual charge is \$410,226.
- The typical Market West office building is charged \$147,280.
- The average hotel pays \$53,678.
- The average Chestnut Street property is charged \$3,291.
- The average Walnut Street property contributes \$2,369.
- The average residential property's bill is \$180.

Where the Money Comes From...



...and Where it Goes Total = \$11.9 million



The *Center City Digest* is a publication of the Center City District (CCD), a private-sector sponsored municipal authority committed to providing supplemental services that make Philadelphia's downtown clean, safe and attractive; and of Central Philadelphia Development Corporation (CPDC) with over 40 years of private-sector commitment to the revitalization of downtown Philadelphia.

Newsletter editor
Elise Vider